

**Application**  
**Farms for the Future, Phase 1**  
**Business Plan Development Program**

If you answer "yes" to the following three questions, you may be eligible for technical assistance to develop a business plan.

Do you:

- ✓ Own 5 or more acres in agricultural production?
- ✓ Anticipate keeping your land in agriculture for at least 5 years?
- ✓ Have an idea for making a change or improvement that will make your farm more economically sound?

If so, it is our goal to help you if we can.

We are looking for a clear picture of where you are and what your vision for your farm business is. The questions in this application are designed to guide you in giving us the information we need. Please do the best you can to describe your current situation and your idea for change in the spaces provided.

**Please do not modify the application formatting or pagination.** It is important that the page numbering and spacing stay the same; these pages are all the program's Review Panel considers when considering your application.

**It typically takes a farm 6 months to complete a business plan.** If you are accepted into the program, technical assistance teams will be designed to match your idea and needs and will begin working with you in November.

**The application deadline for assistance with business planning is September 25, 2006.**

Please return your completed application with one required attachment to:  
Kerri Sands, CEI, 2 Portland Fish Pier, Suite 201, Portland, ME, 04101

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Farm \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

1. Town\_\_\_\_\_ County\_\_\_\_\_
2. Total farmland acreage owned \_\_\_\_\_ Total owned acres in production \_\_\_\_\_
3. How long have you been farming this land? \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you owned it? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Acres you lease for your use \_\_\_\_\_
5. Acres enrolled in current-use tax programs: Tree Growth \_\_\_\_ Open Space \_\_\_\_ Farmland \_\_\_\_
6. Have you sold or donated development rights on your farm? Yes No  
*If so, you may not be eligible for a Phase 2 grant. Your eligibility for Phase 1 (this application) is not affected.*
7. What is your farming background, and what else in your background contributes to your capability as a farm manager?

8. Please describe your idea for change in 6 words or less and then in a paragraph. (Please specify the anticipated economic benefit of this change.)

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Will this change have a positive effect on natural resources and the environment? \_\_\_\_  
 (If yes, please describe.)

10. Please describe the suitability and productivity of the land currently in agricultural use based upon its soil classification, physical features, slope and location.

11. Please complete the chart below.			
Equipment	Condition	Buildings (type & size)	Condition

12. What was your gross income from the farm in 2005? \$\_\_\_\_\_

13. What is primarily produced on the farm?

(If more than one crop or product, please number in order of most income to least income.)

__vegetables	__herbs	__pigs
__berries	__ornamentals	__sheep
__orchard	__hay	__poultry
__maple syrup	__grain	__horses
__greenhouse	__beef	__commodity_____
__flowers	__dairy	__other_____

14. Please identify acres, infrastructure and sales per crop or product.

Farm Crop or Product	Acres used	Building(s) used	2006 gross / net anticipated	2005 gross / net	2004 gross / net
			/	/	/
			/	/	/
			/	/	/
			/	/	/
			/	/	/

15. Please identify any farm debt, including mortgages. If none, please state so.

Amount outstanding	Held by	Payoff date

16. Please identify the family members working on the farm.

Family member	% of time working on the farm	% of time working off the farm *	Off-farm income
Owner:		*	\$
			\$
			\$
			\$

\* If the owner is not principally engaged in agricultural activities, please state the short-and long-term plans for keeping the property in agricultural use.

17. Please describe any pressure that might cause you or your family to stop farming.

**18. To complete this application you must fill in and sign the statement below.**

I/we, \_\_\_\_\_, agree that the  
(please print)

information in this form is factual, and that I/we authorize a representative of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to conduct a field inspection of the land to be covered by the business plan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner(s)

**19. To complete this application you must also attach copies of your IRS Schedule F or 1120S forms for the 3 most recent tax years.**

If these forms are not available, please explain why not, and describe the condition of the acreage and explain what you have been doing toward making the farm viable:

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Please return your application by September 25, 2006 to:

Kerri Sands, CEI, 2 Portland Fish Pier, Suite 201, Portland, ME 04101  
Phone: 207-772-5356, ext. 114; e-mail: kcs@ceimaine.org

You may also contact Kerri if you have questions about filling out this application, or about the Farms for the Future Program.

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**NOTE:**

**The following additional information is required of all SUCCESSFUL applicants. You do not need to submit these items until you are accepted into the program. Please contact Kerri Sands for more information about how to obtain these items.**

- A map of the property on a United States Geological Survey (USGS) Topographical Map showing the land area to be covered by the plan, and the land to be covered by a possible farmland protection agreement, if different than the land covered by the plan.
- Letters of reference concerning management capability.
- A copy of the current deed(s) to all the parcels of the property and a plan recorded in the registry of deeds delineating the property, book and page numbers included.

Recommended but not required:

- A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) map and farm conservation plan, or its equivalent, showing the breakdown of various soil types and acreage possessing soil capability Classes I through VI. (If you do not have this item, you should begin the process now.)



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & RURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF MARKET AND PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT  
28 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0028

AUGUST 28, 2006

TO: APPLICANTS TO THE FARMS FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAM

FROM: MARY ELLEN JOHNSTON, DIRECTOR

RE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE RULES FOR THE PROGRAM AND IMPACT ON YOUR APPLICATION

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THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE WILL BE INITIATING RULEMAKING THIS COMING FALL AND WINTER TO REVISE THE RULES FOR OPERATING THE FARMS FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAM. THE REASON FOR THE RULEMAKING IS TO IMPROVE THE PROGRAM AND BETTER TARGET SERVICES TO FARMERS.

WE EXPECT THAT THESE CHANGES MAY IMPACT THE CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF PROJECTS FOR INVESTMENTS FOR PHASE II GRANTS. WE CANNOT ANTICIPATE WHAT THOSE CHANGES WILL BE. THOSE WHO ARE SELECTED FOR BUSINESS PLAN ASSISTANCE THIS FALL WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY INFORMED OF THE PROPOSED RULE CHANGES AND WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MAKING COMMENTS ON THE RULES.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE RULEMAKING, PLEASE CONTACT MY OFFICE AND I OR ONE OF THE OTHER STAFF ASSIGNED TO THE PROGRAM WILL HELP ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

**FARMS FOR THE FUTURE  
PHASE 1 ELIBILITY AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

**1. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

An applicant must own at least 5 acres of land in agricultural use and must submit an application to the Department to be eligible for participation in the program.

**2. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

Farms applying under the program, in addition to eligibility requirements in Subsection 6.1, must demonstrate the following and shall be scored accordingly:

**A. The degree of opportunity for increasing the vitality of the farm due to:**

- (1) The number of years and type of agricultural experience and training of the applicant and/or co-applicant.
- (2) The suitability and productivity of the land for agricultural use based on its soil classification, physical features and location
- (3) The condition and suitability of the physical resources of the farm (equipment and buildings)
- (4) The number of acres of land to be placed in the program

**B. The degree of threat to the continuation of agricultural use of the land due to:**

- (1) The management capability of the applicant to effect positive changes in farm operations and the financial capacity of the farm operation.